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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0110
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AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, MARR, UNSC, XF
SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION ON SOUTHERN LEBANON

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CONSULTATIONS ON THE MARGIN OF MARCH 17 COUNCIL MEETING POINT TO POSSIBILITY OF VERY RAPID AGREEMENT ON A RESOLUTION ALONG US LINES. IT WOULD AFFIRM LEBANESE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, CALL FOR ISRAELI WITH-DRAWAL AND ESTABLISH INTERIM UN FORCE. END SUMMARY

2. IN INTENSIVE SERIES OF CONSULTATIONS WITH SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS MARCH 17, USUN SOUGHT TO GAIN SUPPORT
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FOR THE US ELEMENTS IN THE OUTCOME OF THE CURRENT DEBATE ON SOUTHERN LEBANON. AMBASSADOR MCHENRY AND MISSION OFFICERS MET WITH LEBANESE PERMREP TUENI BEFORE THE COUNCIL MEETING LATE MARCH 17. AFTER REVIEWING IN DETAIL THE THREE ELEMENTS WE ARE CONSIDERING (WITHOUT PROVIDING THEM IN WRITTEN FORM), MCHENRY DREW A COMPARISON OF THE EFFECTS OF OUR PREFERRED OUTCOME WITH THOSE OF A

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SIMPLE WITHDRAWAL RESOLUTION, WHICH A NUMBER OF ARAB DELEGATIONS HAVE URGED ON THE LEBANESE. MCHENRY ARGUED THAT A SIMPLE, QUICK RESOLUTION CALLING ONLY FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM SOUTHERN LEBANON MIGHT WIN SOME POLITICAL POINTS FROM THE ARAB POINT OF VIEW, BUT IT HAD THE FATAL PROSPECT OF ISRAELI REFUSAL TO WITHDRAW FORTHWITH AND SUBSEQUENT DEMANDS FOR CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL FOR FAILURE TO ABIDE BY A SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION. MCHENRY ARGUED THAT THOSE WHO NOW OPPOSE A UN PRESENCE IN THE AREA WOULD OPPOSE IT LATER AS WELL. HE URGED THE WISDOM OF A RESOLUTION WHICH CONTAINS ALL THREE ELEMENTS AS A PACKAGE.

3. TUENI RESPONDED QUICKLY AND AT LENGTH THAT LEBANON DOES NOT SEEK NARROW POLITICAL GAIN; THEY WANT WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES AND RESTORATION OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY IN THE AREA. HE SAID EMPHATICALLY THAT HE WANTED THE ACTION TAKEN ON ALL THREE ELEMENTS AS A PACKAGE. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD TALK WITH KUWAITI PERMREP BISHARA (CURRENT ARAB GROUP CHAIRMAN) ALONG THESE LINES.

4. LATER, AMBASSADORS YOUNG AND MCHENRY PARTICIPATED IN A CONVERSATION TUENI WAS HAVING WITH BISHARA ON THIS SUBJECT. EGYPTIAN PERMREP MEGUID WAS ALSO PRESENT. BISHARA AND MEGUID ARGUED WITH CONSIDERABLE FORCE AND OBVIOUS FEELING THAT UNLESS WITHDRAWAL IS VOTED INITIALLY, CONFIDENTIAL

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PERHAPS LATER FOLLOWED BY CONSIDERATION OF OUR OTHER ELEMENTS, THE ARABS HAD NO ASSURANCE THAT WITHDRAWAL WOULD ACTUALLY OCCUR. THEY ALSO ARGUED THAT UN PEACE-KEEPING PRESENCE, WHATEVER ITS FORM, HAS TENDED HISTORICALLY TO BECOME PERMANENT. TUENI, HOWEVER, WITH-STOOD THESE ARGUMENTS AND DECLARED THAT LEBANON WANTS THE WHOLE PACKAGE OF ALL THREE ELEMENTS TOGETHER. MEGUID SAID THAT IF LEBANON WANTED THE PACKAGE, IT WOULD OF COURSE BE AGREEABLE TO EGYPT, AND BISHARA CHIMED IN WITH AGREEMENT.

5. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION, YOUNG AND LEONARD WERE TOLD BY SYRIAN PERMREP ALLAF THAT HE WANTED THE UN ELEMENTS TO BE INTRODUCED IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY OBVIOUSLY ARE STATIONED ALONG OR AT THE ISRAELI BORDER AND NOT GIVEN A MANDATE TO CONTROL THE ENTIRE ZONE OF SOUTHERN LEBANON. HE ALSO PERSISTED IN HIS STRONG PREFERENCE FOR TWO RESOLUTIONS RATHER THAN ONE WITH ALL OF THE ELEMENTS. HE MENTIONED A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE OF ONE RESOLUTION ACCOMPANIED BY A SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

6. FOLLOWING THE SC MEETING LEONARD RETURNED TO TUENI TO

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RECONFIRM THAT TUENI CONTINUED TO SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A
COMPLETE PACKAGE OF ALL THREE ELEMENTS IN THE SC ACTION.
TUENI AGAIN SPOKE STRONGLY IN SUPPORT OF THIS CONCEPT.
HE SAID HE WOULD BE MEETING WITH THE ARAB GROUP
IMMEDIATELY AND WOULD CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR ACCEPTANCE OF
THIS PLAN. AT THIS POINT WE PASSED TEXT OF DRAFT

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RESOLUTION TO TUENI, ALLAF, AND TROYANOVSKY.

7. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THIS EVENING'S SC MEETING, THE
WESTERN FIVE MET TO DISCUSS THE PRESENT SITUATION. WE
HAD PROVIDED A DRAFT OF OUR OPERATIVE ELEMENTS TO THE
FIVE DELEGATONS PREVIOUSLY. WE REPORTED THE RESULTS OF
OUR SOUNDINGS, AS SUMMARIZED ABOVE. THE OTHER FOUR
INDICATED THEIR CONCURRENCE IN THE POSITION WE ARE
SEEKING TO DEVELOP. UK REPORTED INSTRUCTIONS
FROM LONDON TO FLOAT THEIR OWN DRAFT, BUT
AMBASSADOR RICHARD SAID IN LIGHT OF THE GOOD US DRAFT

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HE WAS NOT PROCEEDING SEPARATELY. HE ASKED SEVERAL TIMES,
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HOWEVER, WHETHER THE OTHER FOUR DELEGATIONS DID NOT AGREE IT MIGHT BE ADVISABLE TO STRIKE FOR A SIMPLE CEASEFIRE RESOLUTION IF THE US PACKAGE PROVES DIFFICULT TO NEGOTIATE SATURDAY, MARCH 18. HE RECEIVED NO SUPPORT FOR THIS TACTIC. CANADA RAISED ULTIMATE CONCERNS ABOUT THE TERMS OF THE MANDATE THAT WOULD BE DRAWN FOR THE UN ROLE UNDER THE DRAFT US RESOLUTION, AND OTHER DELEGATIONS VOICED SOME CONCERN ABOUT HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE TO NEGOTIATE THE PACKAGE TO CONSENSUS OR UNANIMITY. ALL AGREED THAT THE US PROPOSAL MADE SENSE, HOWEVER, AND COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO COMMENCE WORKING IN SUPPORT OF IT IMMEDIATELY.

8. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE A CONSENSUS IS DEVELOPING IN FAVOR OF OUR PACKAGE OF THREE ELEMENTS. ITS FOUNDATION STONE IS AMB. TUENI'S VERY FIRM POSITION THAT HE WANTS AN UNBREAKABLE PACKAGE. WE HOPE HIS GOVERNMENT, GUIDED BY AMB. PARKER, WILL GIVE HIM STRONG INSTRUCTIONS TO USE IN RESISTING IRAQI, LIBYAN AND PERHAPS OTHER PRESSURES TO SEPARATE THE THIRD ELEMENT, PERHAPS WITH SOME CONDITIONAL PROMISE TO ENCOURAGE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UN FORCE AT A SUBSEQUENT COUNCIL MEETING. WE STRONGLY BELIEVE THE ENTIRE PACKAGE OF THREE ELEMENTS MUST BE ENACTED AT A SINGLE SITTING AND QUICKLY OR WE RISK ENDING UP WITH A SIMPLE WITHDRAWAL RESOLUTION. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, EXCLUDE

ENACTMENT OF THE PACKAGE THROUGH TWO SEPARATE RESOLUTIONS. SCENARIO, WHICH WE BELIEVE WOULD BE IRONCLAD, WOULD GO AS FOLLOWS.

9. TEXT OF RESOLUTIONS WOULD BE NEGOTIATED SATURDAY MORNING. ONLY DIFFICULT ELEMENT, WE BELIEVE, WOULD BE THE
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THIRD, ESTABLISHING IN GENERAL TERMS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE UN FORCE. ONCE LANGUAGE HAD BEEN NEGOTIATED, COUNCIL PRESIDENT RICHARD WOULD CALL INFORMAL (CLOSED-DOOR, NO RECORD) "CONSULTATION" OF ENTIRE COUNCIL. TEXTS WOULD BE DISTRIBUTED AND RICHARD WOULD EXPLAIN THAT PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS HAD INDICATED TO HIM THAT THESE TEXTS WOULD BE PASSED WITH NECESSARY MAJORITY OF AT LEAST NINE POSITIVE VOTES AND WITH NO NEGATIVE VOTES. (WE

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ASSUME CHINESE WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE AND WE ALLOW FOR
POSSIBLE SOVIET ABSTENTION, BUT WOULD HAVE ASSURED
OURSELVES THAT NEITHER WOULD VETO.) AFTER RECEIVING
COMMENTS OR SIMPLE ASSENT FROM EACH MEMBER, RICHARD WOULD
THEN SUGGEST THAT COUNCIL MOVE TO PUBLIC COUNCIL CHAMBER
TO CARRY OUT ARRANGEMENT JUST AGREED. THIS IS SCENARIO
DISCUSSED THIS EVENING IN WESTERN FIVE MEETING, AND WE
CONCUR IN JUDGMENT EXPRESSED THERE THAT IT IS INCONCEIVABLE
THAT SOVIETS OR CHINESE WOULD DOUBLE-CROSS OR THAT KUWAITI
REP WOULD TOLERATE ANY ARAB ATTEMPT TO DISRUPT PROCEDURE.

1O. WE BELIEVE THAT SYRIANS, HAVING MADE BIG POINT OF
SEPARATING OUR RESOLUTION IN TWO, WOULD BE ENCOURAGED BY
THIS CONCESSION INTO A MORE POSITIVE POSTURE TOWARD
UN FORCE AND WOULD HELP TO BRING ALONG SOVIETS. EVEN
MORE IMPORTANT WOULD BE THEIR COOPERATION, IF IT CAN BE
GAINED, IN MAKING ENTIRE SCHEME WORK ON GROUND. SINCE WE
CLEARLY CAN NOT REPEAT NOT CONCEDE ON THEIR MORE
SUBSTANTIVE POINT - DESIRE TO HAVE UN FORCE OPERATE ONLY
ALONG INTERNATIONAL BORDER, NOT AS "OCCUPATION FORCE"
WITHIN LEBANON - WE WILL HAVE BETTER CHANCE OF SYRIAN
COOPERATION IF WE CAN GIVE WAY ON THIS SECONDARY PROCEDURAL
POINT. IT IS ALSO A POINT OF SOME MOMENT TO OTHER ARABS
HERE, INCLUDING AT LEAST EGYPT AND KUWAIT.

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

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11. WE BELIEVE SYRIAN POINT THAT UN SHOULD OPERATE ONLY ALONG A LINE SEPARATING ISRAEL FROM LEBANON CAN MOST EFFECTIVELY BE DEALT WITH BY LEBANESE. TUENI HAS NO HESITATION IN ACKNOWLEDGING LEBANESE ARMY'S WEAKNESS, BUT HIS AUTHORITIES MAY NEED TO ASSURE SYRIANS THAT THEY STRONGLY PREFER UN PRESENCE TO THAT OF ISRAELIS AND DO NOT CONSIDER THEIR SOVEREIGNTY WILL BE IMPAIRED IN ACCEPTING UN ON A TEMPORARY BASIS. REAL PROBLEM IS OF COURSE MUCH DEEPER: WILL UN AND WHATEVER FORCES LEBANESE CAN SEND SOUTH REALLY ATTEMPT AND SUCCEED IN KEEPING ARMED PALESTINIAN BANDS BACK FROM ISRAELI BORDER. THAT QUESTION WILL HARDLY BE DEFINITIVELY ANSWERED TOMORROW IN CONFIDENTIAL

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SECURITY COUNCIL, BUT UNLESS COUNCIL CAN PROVIDE FRAMEWORK, IT WILL NOT BE MAKING ITS CONTRIBUTION TO INDUCING ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. END COMMENT

12. DEPARTMENT CONCURS IN USE BY EMBASSY BEIRUT OF FOREGOING ACCOUNT OF SC SITUATION IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE FIRM LEBANESE INSISTENCE ON INTEGRITY OF OUR THREE-POINT PACKAGE, WHETHER IN SINGLE RESOLUTION OR THROUGH SOME OTHER RELIABLE PROCEDURE. YOUNG

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